

Amendments To Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 3 with the following amended paragraph:

In the past, data has been stored and maintained on various different platforms. For example, certain entities use systems based on Microsoft® technology, such as Windows NT™, Internet Information Services ("IIS"), or Component Object Model ("COM"). Other entities may use systems based on a UNIX™ platform, such as those developed by Sun Microsystems, using programs such as WebSphere Application Server™ ("WAS") and programming languages such as the JAVA™ language. In certain situations, a single organization may use two different platforms (e.g., different divisions of a single organization may use different platforms). In other situations, an organization may wish to share data and programs with another organization, which uses a different platform.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 3 with the following amended paragraph:

The present invention may be described herein in terms of functional block components, screen shots, optional selections and various processing steps. It should be appreciated that such functional blocks may be realized by any number of hardware or software components configured to perform the specified functions. For example, the present invention may employ various integrated circuit components, e.g., memory elements, processing elements, logic elements, look-up tables, and the like, which may carry out a variety of functions under the control of one or more microprocessors or other control devices. Similarly, the software elements of the present invention may be implemented with any programming or scripting language such as C, C++, Java, COBOL, assembler, PERL, ~~Visual Basic~~ VISUAL BASIC, or the like, with the various algorithms being implemented with any combination of data structures, objects, processes, routines or other programming elements. Further, it should be noted that the present invention may employ any number of conventional techniques for data transmission, signaling, data processing, network control, and the like.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 1 with the following amended paragraph:

In an exemplary embodiment, the system includes a bi-directional interoperability framework between diverse platforms, such as, for example, between WAS/SUN/JAVAJava™ and IIS/NT/COM applications. The system is a consolidated package for diverse platforms to interoperate and transfer data. The invention allows the development of components on, e.g., the

WAS/SUN/~~Java~~JAVA™ platform, while at the same time, allowing applications on, *e.g.*, the IIS/NT/COM platform to reuse the services/components built on WAS/SUN/~~Java~~JAVA™. Further, the cross-platform services, which typically included a separate effort on WAS/SUN/JAVA™, as well as the IIS/NT/COM side, can now be offered through an interoperability channel, thus alleviating the need for two separate development efforts. Moreover, the invention can be delivered as an enterprise infrastructure solution within an organization, thereby allowing new applications to reuse the business functions/components already built on both WAS/SUN/JAVA™ and IIS/NT/COM platforms.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 15 with the following amended paragraph:

An overview of an exemplary embodiment of the present invention is presented in **Figure 1**. NT/COM/IIS system 112 communicates with client 110 and various programs 114. In a similar manner, WAS/SUN/JAVA™ system 122 communicates with client 120 and various programs 124. In a traditional system, system 112 is not able to communicate or share data with system 122. However, an embodiment of the present invention involves the use of an interoperability component 102 to allow the systems to communicate with each other and exchange information.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 23 with the following amended paragraph:

Figure 2 presents further details of the structure of an exemplary embodiment of the present invention. It may be desired to exchange information between an IIS/NT/COM component 202 and a WAS/SUN/JAVA™ component 204. COM component 202 may be configured to communicate a request to a transmission component 212. Transmission component 212 may be configured to transmit the request to a request component 214. Request component 214 can build and format a request stream and transmit the stream back to transmission component 212. Transmission component 212 is configured to be in communication with JAVA™ object 250 and to transmit the request stream. JAVA™ object 250 is configured to translate the request stream and obtain the requested data or perform the requested command via communication with WAS/SUN/JAVA™ component 204. The information can then be transmitted back to transmission component 212 through JAVA™ object 250, which may translate the response and transmit the response to COM component 202.

In an exemplary embodiment, the information communicated between transmission component 212 and JAVA™ object 250 is through mutually agreed eXtensible Markup Language (“XML”) messages, transmitted via HyperText Transfer Protodcol (“HTTP”) or Secure HyperText Transfer Protocol (“HTTPS”), using a version of Secure Sockets Layer (“SSL”).

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 14, line 14 with the following amended paragraph:

With reference to **Figure 3**, the steps performed in an exemplary use of the system is as follows. Figure 3, in particular, illustrates IT access to SDP services. A customer using an IT website makes a request that causes a ~~Java~~JAVA™ Server Page (“JSP”) on the IT Web Server to be run (step 302). Because the request cannot be satisfied using JSP computing resources, the JSP on the IT Web Server determines that it must obtain the data requested by the client from the SDP system, so it invokes an Internet Server Application Programming Interface (“ISAPI”) extension Dynamic Load Library (“DLL”) on the SDP Web Server using the URL for the extension. The information required by the extension to run the requested method is translated into the XML stream that will identify the business request and is sent via HTTP (step 304). The extension then invokes a SDP Microsoft Transaction Server (“MTS”) COM object to perform the necessary functions to fulfill the request (step 306). The SDP COM object performs the requested business work, which may involve gathering data from a back-end system, and presenting the data in the desired format (step 308). The SDP COM object returns the resulting data to the ISAPI extension (step 310). The ISAPI extension converts the data to XML and passes it to the IT Web Server via a HTTP response (step 312). The XML data is parsed on the IT side and sent to the JSP. The JSP obtains the data it requires to build its Hypertext Markup Language (“HTML”) page. The JSP then serves the resulting HTML page to the client browser (step 314). It should be pointed out that, in an exemplary embodiment, steps 306-312, listed above, are performed by the external server, while steps 302, 304, and 314 are performed at the originating, IT server.

Please insert the following new Brief Description of the Drawings immediately following the section entitled "Brief Summary of the Invention":

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A more complete understanding of the present invention may be derived by referring to the detailed description and claims when considered in connection with the Figures, wherein like reference numbers refer to similar elements throughout the Figures, and:

Figure 1 is a block diagram illustrating an exemplary overview of the present invention;

Figure 2 is a block diagram illustrating a detailed view of an exemplary structure for the present invention;

Figure 3 is a flow chart illustrating exemplary steps for performing IT access to SDP services;

Figure 4 is a flow chart illustrating an exemplary use of the system for SDP access to IT services;

Figure 5 is a flow chart illustrating an exemplary operation of an embodiment when SDP uses information available through an IT service;

Figure 6 is a flow chart illustrating an exemplary operation of an embodiment when SDP receives a request from an IT client;

Figure 7 is a block diagram illustrating exemplary classes that can be used in a visual basic embodiment;

Figure 8 is a flow chart illustrating an exemplary operation for facilitating communication between disparate computing platforms; and,

Figure 9 is a flow chart illustrating an exemplary overview of the operation of translating a request into a predetermined format.